



December 2, 2015

Mr. Richard H. Anderson, CEO
Delta Airlines
P.O. Box 20706
Atlanta, GA 30320-6001

Dear Mr. Anderson,

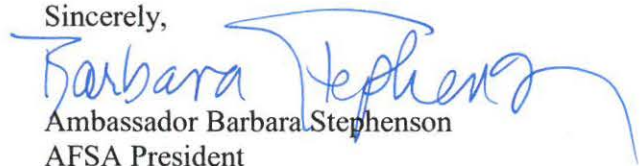
I write to you as the President of the American Foreign Service Association, the professional association of the United States Foreign Service. It has recently come to our attention that Delta plans to no longer accept pets as accompanied baggage, but as cargo (except for pets that meet your in-cabin requirements). Many of our members are greatly distressed by this development because of the sharply increased costs involved, making taking a family pet beyond the reach of many, and in some instances, because of safety concerns for pets in countries simply not equipped to deal with pets as cargo. We understand that Delta Airlines has agreed to grant waivers to the cargo-only rule to members of the U.S. military traveling on official "active transfer" orders. I urge you to extend your waiver policy to include U.S. government civilian employees traveling on official change of station orders to and from assignments abroad. Three years ago, AFSA worked constructively with United Airlines on this issue; as a result, United extended their waiver as proposed above.

AFSA represents members of the American Foreign Service from the Department of State, the U.S. Agency for International Development, the Foreign Commercial and Agricultural Services, the Broadcasting Board of Governors, and the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. They serve in embassies and consulates around the world, often shoulder to shoulder with our military. Like our military, they are members of a disciplined service, required to be available worldwide, and subject to rotation on official orders every two-three years. They provide important services to our nation, its businesses and citizens, including consular work that facilitates safe international travel and commercial work that supports American businesses and international trade and investment.

Foreign Service pets are critically important to their families. While moving from country to country (and frequently to hardship posts), pets help manage stress and maintain continuity for their FS owners, while friends are left behind, kids leave their schoolmates and tackle the challenge of learning a new culture and language at the next post. Extending the waiver granted to our military to members of the Foreign Service is a common-sense solution to what otherwise will be a genuine hardship to many and which could result in having to leave pets behind or exposing them to increased risk, at great cost to the humans and the animals involved.

On behalf of our members, AFSA stands ready to work with you in any way we can to help resolve this issue. I look forward to your favorable response.

Sincerely,


Ambassador Barbara Stephenson
AFSA President